

ABSTRACT AND BIOGRAPHY

Conducting Effective Meetings

Meetings consume a major portion of most people's workday. Based on the responses of hundreds of participants, a common perspective is that (on average) 50% of the workday is wasted due to ineffective meetings. A project manager could (in effect) double a project's workforce (or dramatically cut costs) just by making meetings more effective! Some of the most common complaints about meetings include: too long, too many, not focused, relaying non-relevant information which is rarely remembered, don't produce desired results, no process for producing results, and meeting objectives not clear. While a project manager may desire a cohesive team, how the team's meetings are conducted may actually sabotage team operation.

In this presentation you will get new perspectives on the purpose of a meeting, when to hold a meeting (and when not to), and specific guidelines on conducting effective meetings that people would not miss. Software tools will be reviewed that support the implementation of these guidelines. Using these guidelines, a NASA center senior executive group reduced their weekly meeting times from 8 hours to 2 hours, a result that still holds eight years later. A project leadership team used web-based tools for action items, weekly status, risk management, and meeting minutes to dramatically increase the throughput and efficiency of recurring meetings. The use of software tools in conjunction with effective meeting management improved the connection between team members and their individual accountabilities in the near term contributing to measurable results in fulfillment of year-long obligations.

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Ivan Rosenberg is President & CEO of Frontier Associates, Inc., a management consulting firm specializing in scientific organizations and the aerospace industry. For over 25 years Dr. Rosenberg has supported organizations in achieving performance breakthroughs through innovative approaches to problem-solving and team and partnership-building. He has consulted directly with over 17 NASA missions, including the Deep Impact mission for the four years prior to launch. Dr. Rosenberg has Bachelor and Masters degrees in Elec. Eng. and Comp. Sci. from Cornell University and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Management from the University of Rochester.

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Gary Blackwood has been an employee of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory since 1988. He graduated from MIT with a BS, MS and PhD from the Department of



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Aeronautics and Astronautics. He has worked on dynamics and control of space structures, new mission design for space interferometer instruments, and laser metrology subsystems. He worked on the StarLight Project, Terrestrial Planet Finder project and the Space Interferometry Mission. Currently, Gary is a deputy project manager within the Advanced Optical Systems Program.